

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A particle which has a core-shell structure and comprises a polymer component (A) comprising a thermoplastic polymer (A1) and a thermoplastic hydrophilic polymer (A2),

wherein the core of the particle contains the polymer (A1) which comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a polyolefinic polymer, a styrenic polymer, a hydrophobic vinyl-series polymer, a thermoplastic elastomer, a (meth)acrylic polymer and a polyamide-series polymer, and

the shell of the particle contains the hydrophilic polymer (A2) which has a hydrophilicity higher than the polymer (A1) and has at least one hydrophilic group selected from the group consisting of a hydroxyl group, a carboxyl group, an amino group, an imino group, an ether group, an oxyalkylene group, an ester group and an amide group,

wherein the hydrophilic polymer (A2) comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a polyamide-series polymer, a vinyl acetate-series polymer, a polyvinyl alcohol-series polymer and a cellulose derivative when the polymer (A1) comprises the styrenic polymer or the (meth)acrylic polymer, and the hydrophilic polymer (A2) comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a polyvinyl alcohol-series polymer and a cellulose derivative when the polymer (A1) comprises the ~~polyamide-series polymer~~ polyamide-series polymer,

wherein both of the particle and the core thereof are spherical, and

wherein when an additive is present in the particle, the additive is distributed in the shell or in both the core and shell of the particle.

2-4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously presented) A particle according to claim 1, wherein the shell has a thickness of 10 nm to 1 μ m.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Previously presented) A particle according to claim 1, wherein the ratio (weight ratio) of the polymer (A1) relative to the hydrophilic polymer (A2) is 30/70 to 99/1.

8-9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously presented) A particle according to claim 1, which is a spherical particle having an average particle size of 0.1 to 100 μm , a coefficient of variation of the average particle size of not more than 60, and a length ratio of a major axis relative to a minor axis of 1.5/1 to 1/1.

11. (Withdrawn) A composition having a disperse system, which comprises
a matrix comprising a water-soluble auxiliary component (B) containing at least an oligosaccharide (B1), and
a particulate dispersed phase comprising an organic solid component (A) containing a plurality of organic solid materials, and dispersed in the matrix.

12. (Withdrawn) A composition according to claim 11, wherein the organic solid component (A) comprises a first organic solid material (A1) and a second organic solid material (A2), and the first material (A1) and the second material (A2) being immiscible with each other and different in affinity relative to the auxiliary component (B) from each other.

13. (Withdrawn) A composition according to claim 11, wherein the dispersed phase is a spherical dispersed phase having an average particle size of 0.1 to 100 μm , a coefficient of variation of the average particle size of not more than 60, and a length ratio of a major axis relative to a minor axis of 1.5/1 to 1/1.

14. (Withdrawn) A composition according to claim 11, wherein the oligosaccharide (B1) comprises at least a tetrasaccharide.

15. (Withdrawn) A composition according to claim 11, wherein the oligosaccharide (B1) comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a starch sugar, a galactooligosaccharide, a coupling sugar, a fructooligosaccharide, a xylooligosaccharide, a soybean oligosaccharide, a chitin oligosaccharide and a chitosan oligosaccharide.

16. (Withdrawn) A composition according to claim 11, wherein the oligosaccharide (B1) has a viscosity of not lower than 1 Pa·s when a 50% by weight aqueous solution of the oligosaccharide is measured at a temperature of 25°C by a B-type viscometer.

17. (Withdrawn) A composition according to claim 11, wherein the auxiliary component (B) comprises the oligosaccharide (B1) and a water-soluble plasticizing component (B2) for plasticizing the oligosaccharide (B1).

18. (Withdrawn) A composition according to claim 17, wherein the oligosaccharide (B1) shows a melting point or softening point or is decomposed at a temperature higher than each of heat distortion temperatures of a plurality of organic solid materials constituting the organic solid component (A), and the melting point or softening point of the plasticizing component (B2) is not higher than the heat distortion temperature of at least one of the organic solid materials.

19. (Withdrawn) A composition according to claim 17, wherein the plasticizing component (B2) comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a saccharide and a sugar alcohol.

20. (Withdrawn) A composition according to claim 19, wherein the sugar alcohol comprises at least one member selected from the group of erythritol, pentaerythritol, arabitol, ribitol, xylitol, sorbitol, dulcitol and mannitol.

21. (Withdrawn) A composition according to claim 17, wherein the ratio (weight ratio) of the oligosaccharide (B1) relative to the plasticizing component (B2) is 99/1 to 50/50.

22. (Withdrawn) A composition according to claim 17, wherein the organic solid component (A) comprises a plurality of polymers, and each of the polymers has a Vicat softening temperature defined by JIS K 7206 of 60 to 300°C;

the oligosaccharide (B1) has a viscosity of 3 to 100 Pa·s when the viscosity is measured using a 50% by weight aqueous solution of the oligosaccharide at a temperature of 25°C by a B-type viscometer; and

the auxiliary component (B) has a melt flow rate defined by JIS K 7210 of not less than 1 when measured at a temperature 30°C higher than the minimum point of the Vicat softening temperatures of said polymers.

23. (Withdrawn) A composition according to claim 11, wherein the ratio (weight ratio) of the organic solid component (A) relative to the auxiliary component (B) is 55/45 to 1/99.

24. (Withdrawn) A process for producing a particle comprising an organic solid component (A) containing a plurality of organic solid materials, which comprises eluting an auxiliary component (B) from a composition recited in claim 11.

25. (Canceled)

26. (Previously presented) A particle according to claim 1, wherein the polymer (A1) comprises at least one hydrophobic polymer selected from the group consisting of a polyolefinic polymer and a hydrophobic vinyl-series polymer, and the hydrophilic polymer (A2) comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a vinyl acetate-series polymer, a polyvinyl alcohol-series polymer, a polyester-series polymer, a polyurethane-series polymer, a (meth)acrylic polymer and a cellulose derivative.

27. (Previously presented) A particle according to claim 1, wherein the polymer (A1) comprises at least one hydrophobic polymer selected from the group consisting of a hydrophobic polyolefinic polymer, a vinyl chloride-series polymer and a fluororesin, and the hydrophilic polymer (A2) comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a vinyl acetate-series polymer, a polyvinyl alcohol-series polymer, a (meth)acrylic polymer and a cellulose derivative.

28. (Previously presented) A particle according to claim 1, wherein the polymer (A1) comprises a styrenic polymer and the hydrophilic polymer (A2) comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a polyamide-series polymer, a polyvinyl alcohol-series polymer and a cellulose derivative.

29. (Previously presented) A particle according to claim 1, wherein the polymer (A1) comprises a (meth)acrylic polymer and the hydrophilic polymer (A2) comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a polyvinyl alcohol-series polymer and a cellulose derivative.

30. (Previously presented) A particle according to claim 1, wherein the polymer (A1) comprises a thermoplastic elastomer and the hydrophilic polymer (A2) comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a polyamide-series polymer, a vinyl acetate-series polymer, a polyvinyl alcohol-series polymer and a cellulose derivative.

31. (Previously presented) A particle according to claim 1, wherein the polymer (A1) comprises a polyester-series thermoplastic elastomer and the hydrophilic polymer (A2) comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a polyamide-series polymer, a polyvinyl alcohol-series polymer and a cellulose derivative.

32. (Canceled)

33. (New) A particle which has a core-shell structure and comprises a polymer component (A) comprising a thermoplastic polymer (A1) and a thermoplastic hydrophilic polymer (A2),

wherein the core of the particle contains the polymer (A1) which comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a polyolefinic polymer, a styrenic polymer, a hydrophobic vinyl-series polymer, a thermoplastic elastomer, a (meth)acrylic polymer and a polyamide-series polymer, and

the shell of the particle contains the hydrophilic polymer (A2) which has a hydrophilicity higher than the polymer (A1) and has at least one hydrophilic group selected from the group consisting of a hydroxyl group, a carboxyl group, an amino group, an imino group, an ether group, an oxyalkylene group, an ester group and an amide group,

wherein the hydrophilic polymer (A2) comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a polyamide-series polymer, a vinyl acetate-series polymer, a polyvinyl alcohol-series polymer and a cellulose derivative when the polymer (A1) comprises the styrenic polymer or the (meth)acrylic polymer, and the hydrophilic polymer (A2) comprises at least one member selected from the group consisting of a polyvinyl alcohol-series polymer and a cellulose derivative when the polymer (A1) comprises the polyamide-series polymer,

wherein both of the particle and the core thereof are spherical, and

wherein the particle further comprises an additive which is at least one selected from the group consisting of a filler, a plasticizer, softener, an agent for imparting photodegradable property, a lubricant, a stabilizer, an ultraviolet-scattering agent, a dispersing agent, a flame retardant, an antistatic agent, a charge control agent, a superplasticizer, a wax and a crosslinking agent.